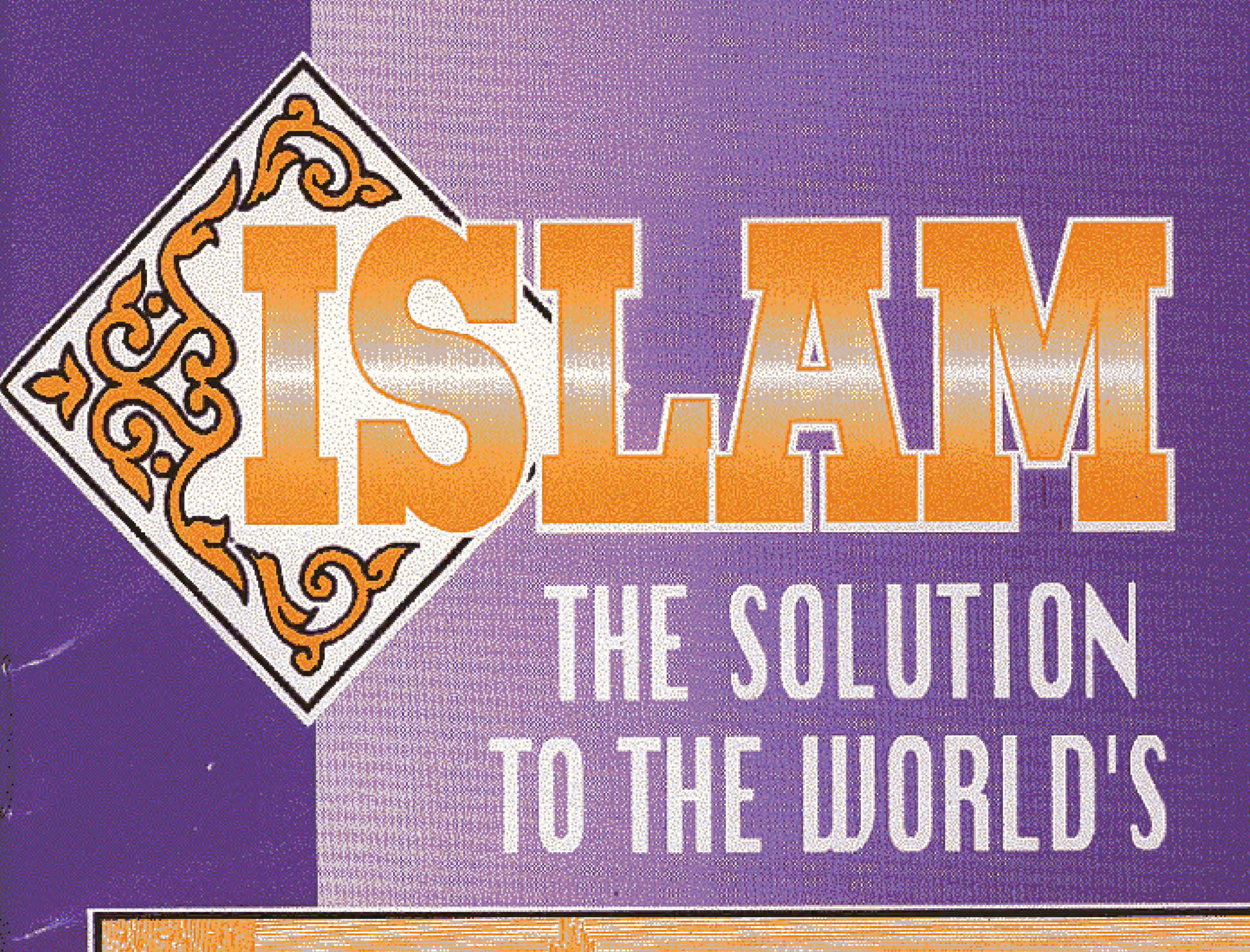


ISLAM

THE SOLUTION TO THE WORLD'S PERPLEXING SOCIAL PROBLEMS

الإسلام

الحل الأمثل لمشاكل العالم الإجتماعية

Mamarinta-Umar P. Mubabaya

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC PUBLISHING HOUSE



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE

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GLOBAL PROBLEMS AND THE NEED FOR ISLAMIC SOLUTIONS

The world is plagued by all sorts of problems - social unrest, political instabilities, mass poverty and destitution, prostitution, homicides, killings, drug addiction, alcoholism, family break-ups, juvenile delinquency, suicides and the so-called Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome(AIDS)

The AIDS Epidemic

The so-called Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is currently the world's most frightening killer disease. The Nobel Laureate Dr. Hoshua Lederberg, President of Rockefeller University, said that AIDS would become the world's third-leading killer disease that would kill 10 percent of the world's population over the next 20 years.[1] Addressing the opening session of a two-day medical conference at the University of West Indies, on the theme "Emerging Viruses as a Threat to Mankind", Lederberg also predicted that "some nations" might lose as much as 40 percent of their population over the next 10 years because of the AIDS virus."

Statistics released by the World Health Organization (WHO) reveal that the total confirmed AIDS cases worldwide passed the 200,000 mark in 1989.· The United States, the world's worst AIDS-affected country, accounts for more than 113 thousand of total AIDS victims worldwide in 1989.[2] Brazil (9,555 cases through December of 1989) is the highest in Latin America, and ranks second to the United States, on a global basis. France with 8,022 cases is the highest in Europe, and is the world's

third-ranking AIDS country.[1] Other major AIDS-stricken areas are Malawi at a rate of 22.2 per 100,000 people), Switzerland (5.9 per 100,000 people) and Australia (2.8 per 100,000 people).[2]. On a regional basis, America accounts for roughly 70% of the world's total AIDS cases; Europe and Africa combined, roughly 26%; and Oceania and Asia, the marginal balance. WHO Secretary General Dr. Hiroshi Najma believes that the actual number of AIDS cases was more than twice as high. He estimates that "there are at least 375,000 cases of AIDS and between 5 million to 10 million persons are infected by the virus who will die sooner or later."[3] Lately, WHO estimated that the worldwide number of AIDS cases will reach more than 1 million by 1991 and climb to almost 6 million by the end of 1990S.[4] The usual AIDS victims are homosexuals and prostitutes. Thus, AIDS is a mere by-product of the related menaces of homosexuality, sodomy and prostitution. The AIDS epidemic has already started hitting some Christian clergymen, because many of them are homosexuals. In fact, 20% of the U.S. Catholic clergy are reportedly homosexual, of which 50% are sexually active.[5] Also cited in the February 23 1987 issue of Newsweek, this was the conclusion of Baltimore therapist A.W. Richard Sipe's 25-year (1960-1985) study covering 1,500 interviews, out of the total 57,000 catholic priests. Himself a former priest, Sipe believes that the number of gay priests in the United States has increased significantly. In fact, in Gay Priests, a book recently published by Harper and Row, University of Kentucky researcher James G. Wolf revealed that the extent of clerical homosexuality is in the range of 40% to 60%, as estimated by his respondents, who themselves are gay priests. Only one of those interviewed reported that he had

1 Arab News, January 29, 1990, p. 9.
2 Arab News, May 6, 1989
3 Arab News, March 7, 1989. Human Immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is the one that causes AIDS. See Arab News, June 6, 1988.
4 Arab News, January 29, 1990, p. 9.
5 Time Magazine, November 13, 1989, p. 44.

abstained entirely from sex since he became a priest and 37% disclosed their "sexual activity to be frequent since ordination".[1]

In his opening address to the international conference on "AIDS in Asia and the Pacific" in March 1989, Thai Princess Dr. Chulaphorn estimated that those already infected with the AIDS virus would pass it on to about 100 million peoples by the end of the century.[2] Such forecast is not unlikely to happen, bearing in mind that prostitution, pornography and homosexuality are not only condoned in many countries worldwide, but also becoming lucrative sources of living in the West. This is aggravated by the fact that there is now a rising trend for international trade in children. Prostitution, pornography and slavery are reportedly linked to the traffic in children from the developing countries to the United States and Europe.[3] Unfortunately governments in Latin America and South East Asia neither cooperate with each other to ban this illegal trade, nor punish the offenders.

Is the AIDS epidemic not a warning to the transgressors? More than 1400 years ago, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), by the infinite wisdom and mercy of Allah, had already admonished mankind of the consequences and dangers of promiscuous sexual relationships:

> "Whenever sexual permissiveness spreads among the people until it becomes declared, infections and killing disease, as well as illnesses not previously found in their ancestors will also spread among them."[4]

1 Time Magazine, November 13, 1989, p. 44.
2 Arab News, March 7, 1989.
3 South Magazine, December 1987, p. 9.
4 Ibn Maja, Al-Bazzar and Al-Baihaqi; quoted by Suleiman Qush, The Scientific Discoveries in Correlation to the Glorious Qur'an (Manila: Islamic Da'wah Council of the Philippines, 1988), p. 83.

Sexual promiscuity may also "lead to cervical dyplasia, with the risk of malignancy. The development of these pathological changes is related to the frequency of sexual intercourse and the number of partners."[1]

Cognizant of the danger of AIDS, Chinese doctors have likened this epidemic to that of nuclear holocaust. They reported in the People's Daily, the official Chinese Communist Party newspaper, that "*AIDS is considered the world's most dangerous scourge of the 20th century.*"[2] The Chinese doctors must have been trying to warn their fellowmen to refrain from the current fad of pre-marital sex that is prevailing in the West, and is now adopted in China. Pan Suiming, professor of sexology at the People's University of Peking, carried out two studies of the Chinese sexual habits, with quite alarming results. The studies reveal that "*Young people in big cities know a lot about sex now. Practically all have sexual relations before marriage. Those who don't have become the exception.*" Moreover, the studies also disclose that "adultery is on the increase: among almost 10% of Peking couples one partner has had extra marital affairs, more often men than women."[3]

Soaring Crime Rates in the Leading Democratic and Communist Countries

Irrefutable facts show that man-made systems, devoid of Divine guidance, have done more harm than good to humanity. Take the case of the United States, currently the reigning "Super

1 See Keith L. Moore, The Developing Human: Clinically Oriented Embryology (Jeddah: Dar Al-Qiblah, 1983), p. 158.
2 Arab News, Feb 26, 1989, p.16.
3 Asiaweek, October 14, 1988, p. 41.

power" and the forerunner of democracy. The Fortune magazine unraveled in 1987 the major crimes devastating the United States, as follows:

> "Robbery and rape rates nearly quadrupled between 1963 and 1980; burglary and assault rates roughly tripled; the murder rate more than doubled. The result is that a 12-year-old American boy has an 89% chance of becoming a victim of violent crime in his lifetime, and an urban household has a 93% chance of being burgled sometime during the next 20 years."[1]

> The crime rates in the United States have persisted because only "few criminals have been made to pay a penalty."[2] In fact, "fewer than a third of those convicted of a serious crime against persons or property go to prison, and of the many who walk away with only probation, 65% get picked up for similar crimes within three years."[3]

In its annual report "*Crime in the United States*", the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reveals that there were 13.9 million criminal offenses across America in 1988, reflecting a 3% increase over that of 1987, 17% higher than five years ago and 14% above the level a decade ago. The 1988 total represented an average of more than 5,600 offenses per 100,000 people living in the United States. The FBI report also highlighted 910,092 aggravated assaults in 1988, up six percent from 1987, 33 percent from 1984 and 45 percent from 1979. They accounted for more than half of all reported violent crimes in the country.

1 "America's Underclass: What to do?", Fortune International (Switzerland : Time Inc., May 11, 1987), p. 82.
2 Ibid., p. 87.
3 Ibid.

There were more than a half-million cases of robbery, up five percent from 1987, 12 percent from 1984 and 13 percent from 1979.[1] The FBI was also aware of 1,073,998 motor-vehicle thefts in 1981.[2]

The FBI reported 20,675 murders in the U.S. in 1988, reflecting a murder rate of eight per 100,000 residents. The 1988 murder rate was up 3% from 1987, 11 percent from 1984, but down 4% from a decade ago in 1979. Last year rate was also down 8% from the 1981 rate of 22,516 murders.[3]

The non-Islamic values of free mixing and casual closeness of men and women, without any legitimate connections (say, by virtue of marriage or blood relationship), have created a lot of problems including rapes and other forms of women abuse. In the United States, for example, reported rapes in 1988 totaled 92,486, up two percent from 1987, 10 percent from 1984 and 21 percent from 1979. An estimated 73 of every 100,000 women in the country were reported victims.[4] The 1988 rape rate was substantially lower than that of the 1981 level (178,000 cases). But "for every woman who reported a rape to the police, perhaps nine or maybe 25 did not".[5] Bonafide experts estimate that 2 million to 6 million women in the United States are beaten by their husbands every year.[6]

Human abuse in the United States is not limited to women, but to children as well. In fact, there were more than 2.2 million

1 Arab News, August 7, 1989, p. 5.
2 Time, September 5, 1983, p. 28.
3 The quest for survival by many homeless Americans has certainly contributed to the soaring crime rates in the United States. According to the Urban Institute study, there are more than a half million homeless in the country. See Arab News, November 5, 1988.
4 Arab News, August 7, 1989, p. 5.
5 Time, September 5, 1983, p. 28.
6 Ibid.

child abuse cases in the United States in 1988, compared with 851,000 cases in 1982 and 413,000 cases in 1976.[1]. Physical abuse resulted in the deaths of 1,225 American children in 1988, compared with 1,163 in 1987. The 1988 figure signals the rising trend of child abuse cases in the United States. Moreover, about 5% of dependent elderly Americans may be abused or physically mistreated (granny bashing) by their children.[2]

The Soviet Union – the counterpart of the United States in the East Bloc and the forerunner of *Communism* – is another case of grave concern.

In the Soviet Union, violent crimes have been rising markedly in recent years. Armed robbery went up nationwide by 42.8% in 1987 and 1988; 40% for the first four months of 1989 alone![3]

A huge jump in street crime pushed the overall Soviet crime rate up by nearly one-third in the first-half of 1989. The Soviet Interior Minister Vadim Bakatin told a news conference on July 11, 1989 that 1.1 million crimes were committed in the Soviet Union, 30 percent more than in the same period last year.[4]

Statistics from the Soviet Interior Ministry recently revealed that "the total number of recorded crimes in the Soviet Union rose by 68,700 to 1,867,223 in 1988, an increase of 3.8% over 1987."[5] The statistics further disclosed that in 1988, "the number of murders rose to 16,710 from 14,651 in 1987; 17,658 rapes were reported compared with 16,765 in 1987; cases of assault and battery increased to

1 1988 figure was taken from Arab News, April 1, 1989; 1982 and 1976 figures, from Time, September 5, 1983, p. 30.
2 Time, September 5, 1983, ibid., p. 29.
3 Business Week, June 5, 1989, p. 43.
4 Arab News, July 12, 1989.
5 International Herald Tribune, February 15, 1989, p. 2.

37,191 compared with 28,250 the previous year; and recorded incidents of violent robbery increased to 12,916 from 9,047 in 1987."[1] A sharp increase in the Soviet crime rate has contributed to an atmosphere of insecurity in the Soviet capital and prompted a stern reaction from the Kremlin.[2]

In China, hundreds of special police had to patrol the country's railroads in a bid to combat a dramatic increase in robberies aboard trains in 1989. Many organized Chinese gangs now boldly mug passengers and steal freight, according to the official magazine Beijing Review. Just in the first 3 months of 1989, 1,800 train-board **robberies** occurred, a staggering 89% increase over the same period in 1988.[3]

The Rising Divorce Rates in the West

Divorce problem in the **West** has been persistent at alarming rates. Britain has the highest divorce rate in the twelve-nation European Community and holds third place for children born out of wedlock. Results of a poll conducted by the Family Policy studies Center and published in the mass-circulation Daily Mail indicate a divorce rate of 12.9 per 1000 marriages among Britons, a performance rivalled only the Danes with 12.8 per 1000. Third place for divorces went to the Netherlands, which showed a significantly lower rate of 8.7 per 1000. At the bottom of the list is Ireland where the dissolution of marriage was forbidden by law. The figures evoked worries from the **Daily Mail**, which commented that Britain and much of the rest of Europe faced a

1 Ibid.
2 Arab News, May 9, 1989, p. 12.
3 Ibid.

"breakdown in the family" as an institution of daily life. The study based on statistics for 1986 and 1987, identified Denmark as the country where the most children – 43.8 percent – are born out of wedlock. France followed at 21.9 percent and Britain 20.9 percent. Last place went to Greece, where just under two children were born outside the traditional family framework.[1]

Divorce rate in Finland was 1.3 per 1000 in 1969; in the United States, 2.9 per 1000 in 1968; and in Sweden, 1.3 per 1000 in 1966.[2] Divorce cases in Japan for 1989 were 159,000.[3]

Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

Alcoholism has been a major problem devastating virtually all parts of the non-Muslim world. Specifically, the Americans and the Russians are among the notoriously known alcoholics in the world.

According to the U.S. National Center for Disease Control, "At least **46 percent** of the cirrhosis deaths among U.S. men, and at least 15% of cirrhosis deaths among women, is attributable to heavy drinking."[4]

There are **10 million** alcohol dependents in the United States. There, the death toll due to traffic accidents is 60,000

1 Arab News, June 16, 1989, p. 16.
2 Norman L. Farberow, Ed. Suicide in Different Cultures (Baltimore: University Park Press, 1975), p. 111.
3 Arab News, January 3, 1990, p. 16.
4 Arab News, November 26, 1989, p. 16.

annually, of which **half** of them are related to alcoholism. Deaths due to diseases caused by alcohol range between 15,000 and 20,000 annually; and suicide and murder committed under the influence of alcohol reach a similar figure.[1] The annual costs of alcohol-related problems in the U.S. were **$30** billion in 1971, **$56** billion in 1978 and **$43** billion in 1979.[2]

Nine out of 10 Americans think drugs are a chief important cause of crime and 81% favor using the National Guard to patrol drug infested neighborhoods, according to the survey released on July 29, 1989 by the Lexis Computer Legal Research Service and the National Law Journal. Asked to choose the "chief" or "important" causes of crime, 91% of the respondents said drugs; 87% said the failure of the criminal justice system and 81% cited a decline in moral and ethical values. Those polled were asked to score the perceived safety of American cities, from one (very safe) to ten (very dangerous). The worst eight: New York (7.65; Miami, 7.23; Los Angeles, 6.95; Washington, 6.78; Chicago, 6.56; Detroit, 6.38; Atlanta, 4.81; and Boston, 4.46.[3]

In the Soviet Union, 37% of the workers are alcoholics. Absenteeism, caused not only by the need to spend hours lining up for the staples of the next day's meals but also by widespread drunkenness, is prevalent in the country. **Abseentism** and **alcoholism** are the twin menaces responsible for the country's low industrial productivity and poor quality products.

The Soviet Union is on top of the world as the **Number One** alcohol dependent country, with 25 million Soviets suffering

1 Isbel, Haris, Alcohol Problems and Alcoholism; quoted in Dr. Ali Albar, M. The Problem of Alcohol and its Solution in Islam, Saudi Publishing & Distributing House, 1986, pp. 41, 71.
2 Dr. Ali Albar, M. The Problem of Alcohol and its Solution in Islam, Saudi Publishing & Distributing House, 1986, pp. 37, 71.
3 Arab News, July 31, 1989, p. 16.

from alcohol dependence, and 15% of the adult population now getting treatment for alcohol dependence.[1]

Per caput use of hard liquor in the USSR is the highest in the world and has reportedly increased **fivefold since 1940**. Rampant alcoholism is known to be the most common reason why **one** out of **two Soviet marriages** now ends in **divorce**. **Alcoholism** is also blamed for 67% of all economic crimes, 60% of all serious traffic accidents, and 90% of all murders.[2]

Gorbachev's war against the "green snake" – alcohol abuse – included the closure of more than two-thirds of the country's liquor stores, reduction in the production of wines and spirits, and the increase of fine for public drunkenness from 3 rubles to 50 rubles. Pensioners, however, spend afternoons in the three-hour vodka lines and then sell thirsty workers a glassful at the end of the day – for double the going price.[3]

Unrelenting Suicide Rates

According to Durkheim's theory of suicide, egoism and suicide vary proportionately; suicide and integration are inversely related.[4] The theory postulate, among others, that "*as the level of integration decreases, the individual detaches himself from social life, and his personal goals supersede those of the social community ... Egoism then, is a social condition in which society*

1 Dr. Ali Albar, M. The Problem of Alcohol and its Solution in Islam, Saudi Publishing & Distributing House, 1986, p. 41.
2 Abaya, A.C. A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Communism, FARIT, 1987.
3 Business Week, November 11, 1985, p. 122.
4 Whitney Pope, Durkheim's Suicide: A Classic Analyzed (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 14-17.

is weak, while personality and individuality are highly developed and individual interests are expressed at the expense of social interests."[1]

For instance, Whitney Pope's study on suicide concludes that:

> "Suicide-rates differ from country to country .... Countries of Germanic influence show high suicide-rates ... the effect of Lutheranism and Calvinism, which throw guilt-feelings back on the individual, and make frustration general with no compensating belief in the religious sanctity of such things as poverty, humility, and celibacy ..."[2]

Available facts indicate that in the so-called developed countries where the citizens consider themselves highly developed, cultured and affluent, suicide has been occurring day by day at alarming rates. Many Americans, for instance, commit suicide every day. In fact, every 90 seconds a young American attempts suicide, of which one out of 60 succeeds. An estimated **30,000** people in the **United States** kill themselves annually, including some 5,000 young Americans between the age of 15 and 24. An estimated 100,000 youths attempt suicide annually. Almost **1,900 adolescents** – most of them white males – succeed in killing themselves annually. The suicide rate in the 15 to 19 year age group has doubled over the past 20 years, according to U.S. official figures. Suicide has become the most common cause of death after traffic accidents for this age group.[3] The total U.S. rate for suicides climbed from 11.9 to 12.8 per

1 Whitney Pope, Durkheim's Suicide: A Classic Analyzed (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 17.
2 Emile Durkheim, Suicide: A Study in Sociology (New York The Free Press, 1966), p. 27.
3 Arab News, May 6, 1989

100,000 people from 1980 to 1986. In 1986, 64% of the men and 40% of the women who took their own lives shot themselves.[1] Moreover, the U.S. leads the world in gun use for self-inflicted deaths. In 1986, 7.5 people per 100,000 in America used firearms to kill themselves; Switzerland was second with 6, followed by France with 4.9 and Canada with 4.7.[2] Within a typical 24-hour period, 74 people in America died in a continuing epidemic of gunfire. They were all shot during a single day – Monday, May 1, 1989. The Time magazine candidly poses the question: "How can America think of itself as a civilized society when day after day the bodies file up amid the primitive crackle of gunfire across the land?"[3] Contrary to the wrong impression that life in the United States is a model worth emulating, many Americans are left in the dark, because they do not have any genuine moral guidance to follow. They themselves realized their predicament, but they simply do not know what to do. For instance, a recent survey in the United States disclosed that "*more than 90 percent of the people questioned would change their lives dramatically if they could. They don't like the way they live now, but they don't know how to change.*"[4] Thus, many of them who do not know what to do simply make out a "*living will*" thru the so-called "*Society for the Right to Die*". This phenomenon has recently emerged in the District of Columbia, California, Florida, Virginia and other states.[5]

The case of the **Soviet Union** is even more alarming when compared to the United States. In 1984, for instance, 81,417 Soviets killed themselves, compared to 29,286 Americans in the

1 Time, July 17, 1989, p. 31.
2 ibid.
3 Ibid., pp. 26-27.
4 Excerpts from "The Summary" of Why leaders Can't Lead, Soundview Executive Summaries, Vol. 11, No. 11, November 1989, p. 5; rrom the Book of Warren Bennis, Why leaders Can't Lead (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers).
5 International Business Week (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., July 1, 1985), p. 66.

same year.[1]

In Latin America, suicide rate in **Buenos Aires**, Argentina, was more than 10 per 100,000 people in 1964-1968. In terms of social strata, more than 4000 suicide cases in 1960-65 were reported to the Police, of which the upper class accounted for 144 cases, middle class 1,130 cases and lower class 2,848 cases.[2]

In West Europe, suicide rates in **Norway** were significant for several decades — 6.6 per 100,000 people in 1876-1900, 5.9 per 100,000 in 1901-1925, 6.6 per 100,000 in 1926-1950 and 7.4 per 100,000 in 1951-1969.[3] In the Netherlands, suicide rate was seven per 100,000 through many decades.[4]

In **Great Britain**, the suicide rate over the past four decades ranged from 10 to 12 per 100,000.win S. Shneidman, Ed. Suiciodology: Contemporary Developments (New York: Grune & Stratton, Inc., 1976), p. 504. One recent report reveals that an average of fourteen to a peak of twenty-two people a year commit suicide at Beachy Head alone, on the South Coast, England's most popular spot for suicides.[5]

In the Middle East, **Israel** is known for high suicide rate, which is above that of Norway and the Netherlands and below that of the United States.[6]

1 Arab News, Jan 17, 1989, p. 12.
2 Norman L. Farberow, Ed. Suicide In Different Cultures, op. cit., p. 80.
3 Ibid. p. 80.
4 Ibid. p. 185.
5 Arab News, June 17, 1989, p. 16.
6 Norman L. Farberow, Ed. Suicide In Different Cultures, op. cit., p. 216.

In the Far East, **Japan** has been one of the leading nations in suicide rates.[1] For the age range 15 to 29 years, suicide was the primary cause of death for **Japanese females**, and the second major cause for **Japanese male** in the same age range.[2] Historical data indicate that suicide rates in Japan per 100,000 people were **eighteen** in 1901, **nineteen** in 1910 and 1920, twenty-two in 1930, **twenty** in 1950, **twenty-five** in 1955 and 21 in 1960. The Japanese suicide rate fell to **fourteen** per 100,000 in 1967, which was the same as that of the 1940 level.[3]

In the Indian sub-continent, many **Indian women** commit suicides from time to time, partly because of the Hindu tradition that requires them to raise dowry for marriage. In mid 1989, for instance, three women committed suicide in southern Kerala state, by drinking poison, because of the dowry custom that often means poor women have no choice but to remain spinsters.[4]

ISLAMIC LAW AND ITS VIABILITY TO SOLVE THE CURRENT GLOBAL PROBLEMS

This section covers some notes on the basic concepts of **Islamic Law** and its viability to solve the current global problems. Its details are not within the scope of this work, let alone the fact that these are under the realm of the professional Islamic jurists. As a stepping-stone to further research on the subject, some Qur'anic injunctions and prophetic teachings which serve as

1 Norman L. Farberow, Ed. Suicide in Different Cultures, op. cit., p. 255.
2 Ibid., p. 256.
3 Ibid.
4 Arab News, June 13, 1989, p. 16.

general guidelines for solving the current global problems are also presented here.

The Basic Concepts of Shari'ah and Fiqh

Shari'ah literally means the "*road to a watering place*", hence **the path of God**.[1] It is the body of revealed laws found both in the *Qur'an* and in the *Sunnah*.[2] In principle, a Muslim's life is ruled in its entirety by the *Shari'ah*, which "*spells out the precise rules and regulations governing individual relations with God as well as with fellow-Muslims and non-Muslims.*"[3] Thus, it embraces ideally both the religious and non-religious activities of the Muslims. Bearing in mind the unique character of Islam as a **religion** and **complete code** of life, *Shari'ah* is the **Law** according to which God wants a Muslim to live. *Shari'ah* has a comprehensive **public law** that covers both constitutional and international affairs. Likewise, it has a **private law** that covers both criminal and civil matters. It is fundamentally a doctrine of **acts** and **obligations** based entirely on revealed sources – namely the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*. It is a complete way of life

1 Muhammad A. Al-Buraey, Islamic Law and Administration, California State University, 1974 (Masters thesis, unpublished), p. 51.
2 Abu A'la Maududi defines Shari'ah as "the detailed code of conduct or the canons comprising ways and modes of worship, standards of morals and life and laws that allow and prescribe, that judge between right and wrong. Such Canon law has undergone amendments from time to time and though each Prophet had the same Din (the religion of Islam), he brought with him a different Shari'ah to suit the conditions of his own people and time. This process ended with the advent of Muhammad, the last Prophet (blessing of Allah and peace be upon him), who brought with him the final code which was to apply to all mankind for all times to come. See Abul A'la Mawdudi, Towards Understanding Islam (Kuwait: International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations, 1986), p. 144.
3 Abdul Malik A. Al-Sayed, Social Ethics of Islam: Classical Islamic-Arabic Political Theory and Practice (New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1982), p. 9.

towards which the individual and society must strive.[1]

Fiqh, on the other hand, is a body of laws derived from Shari'ah to cover specific situations not directly treated in the latter. Shari'ah, therefore, is general in nature and scope, laying down the basic principles of Islamic Law. As such, "*Shari'ah is fixed and unchangeable.*" *Fiqh*, on the other hand, is more specific, demonstrating how the basic principles of Shari'ah be applied in particular situations. In other words, *Fiqh* covers the set of rules derived from *Shari'ah*, with specific applications to actual problems. Since actual issues of life vary from time to time, *Fiqh* changes according to the circumstances under which it is applied.[2]

In order to avoid confusion, **Islamic Law** is noted here in a collective sense, covering both the laws of *Shari'ah* and *Fiqh*. *Fiqh* "**calls into play one's intellect and ability to exercise analogical reasoning**", based on injunctions of secondary import, derived from usul (fundamental import).[3] Thus, Fiqh is divided into two main parts: One is **Usul al-fiqh**, literally meaning "roots of law", which is the science of jurisprudence covering the origins and sources from which the branches of the rules of human conduct are derived. It includes the philosophy of law, the sources of rules, the principles of legislation and interpretation as well as application of the text of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. The second part is **furuq al-fiqh**, which means "branches of law", technically connoting the detailed laws actually applicable in courts.

1 Abdul Ghafur Muslim, "Islamic Laws in Historical Perspective: An Investigation into Problems and Principles In the Field of Islamization", The Islamic Quarterly, London: The Islamic Culture Centre, Second Quarter 1987, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, pp. 69-86.
2 Abu Ameenah Bilaal Philips, Evolution of the Madh Habs: Schools of Islamic Law (Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House, 1988), p. 2.
3 As-Sayid Sabiq, Fiq us-Sunnah, (Jeddah: Maktabat al-Khadamat-e al-Hadithah, 1987), Vol. 1, p. iv.

A *faqih* means a jurist; an expert in the field of law, who possesses outstanding knowledge of revealed sources and methodology, and the intelligence to avail of the basic sources through independent reasoning and the principles provided by the Shari'ah. Allah says: [1]

> *Seest thou not how God sets forth a parable? A goodly Word like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches (reach) to the heavens.*
>
> *It brings forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord. So God sets forth parables for men, in order that they may receive admonition.*[2]

The Evolution of Islamic Law

Islamic Law had passed two periods of development and two periods of decay.[3] The first period of development occurred during the apostleship (609-632 C.E.) of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). During this period, the formal sources of

1 Apparently the early Islamic jurists, the founders of the various schools of law, were inspired by the Qur'anic verses 14:24-25 '

2 Qur'an, 14:24-25

3 See Abdul Ghafur Muslim, "Islamic Laws in Historical Perspective: An Investigation Into Problems and Principles in the Field of Islamization", op. cit., p. 70. Traditionally, according to Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, there are six stages of the development of Fiqh, namely: 1) Foundation stage, which covers the era of the Prophet, 2) Establishment stage, which covers the era of the four rightly guided Caliphs, 3) Building stage, from the founding of the Ummayad dynasty (661 CE) until its decline in the middle of the 8th century CE, 4) Flowering stage, from the rise of the Abassid dynasty in the middle of the 8th century CE to the beginning of its decline around the middle of the 10th century C.E., 5) Consolidation stage, from the decline of the Abassid dynasty from about 960 CE to the murder of the last Abassid Caliph at the hands of the Mongols in the middle of the 13th century C.E. and 6) Stagnation and decline stage, from the sacking of Baghdad in 1258 CE to the present. See Evolution of the Madh Habs, op. cit., p. 3.

law stem from the divine command expressed directly in the Qur'an or Sunnah. Fiqh was not formulated as a "new branch of knowledge", because at that time the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions (who were unsurpassed in linguistic abilities) were still alive.[1] The Qur'an at first dealt with religion and morals, particularly in the early verses revealed in Makkah. Later, one finds legal rules relating to family organization, property, private and public affairs, peace and war, crimes and punishments, economic affairs and judicial procedure. All these rules are mingled with religious concepts which account for the religious influence. These legal rules largely constitute "reforms realized by Islam to counter-balance general tendencies in pre-Islamic society. Thus, the first period saw the foundation by which Islamic legislation "significantly translates all the social transformations required for the progress of the *Ummah*."

The second period marked the scientific development of Fiqh as a new branch of knowledge.[2] Thus, after the death of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), the Qur'an and *Sunnah* came "to be considered as basic sources and raw material which assigned to Islamic laws their directive and domain."

The second period emerged with the inclusion in *Shari'ah* of two derivative sources, such as Ijmah (consensus) and *Qiyas* (analogical reasoning) or Ijtihad (independent reasoning).

Qiyas is a mechanical application of analogy, to deduce a rule on the basis of the effective cause in a case, and to apply the same rule to another case whenever the effective cause for both is similar.

The jurists during the second period handled Islamic laws

1 As-Sayid Sabiq, Fiq us-Sunnah, (Jeddah: Maktabat al-Khadamat-e al-Hadithah, 1987), Vol. 1, p. iv.
2 In the author's understanding, the second period corresponds to the establishment, building, flowering and consolidation stages of Fiqh, identified by Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips.

as a whole by the deductive methods of *Qiyas* and *Ijtihad*. The verses of the Qur'an which are considered to provide the basis for *Qiyas* and *Ijtihad* are 38:29 and 29:69. The greatest achievement of this period was "the establishment of the Schools of Islamic Law" (*Mad Habs*), marking the scientific development of Fiqh.[1]

The two periods of stagnation and decline cover "approximately six centuries starting with the sacking of Baghdad in 1258 C.E. and the execution of the last Abaasid caliph, al-Musta'sim, and ending around the middle of the 19th century of the Christian era."[2]

The first period of the decline in the development of *Fiqh* is also known as the period of Taqlid (the blind-following of one particular school of law). This period, characterized by blind-following, political antagonism and factionalism, led to the neglect of Ijtihaad and the evolution of the madh-habs into totally separate entities closely resembling sects.[3] Thus, Taqlid reduced "Islamic law practically to a frozen state."[4] The reasons for the emergence of *Taqlid* include the "destruction of Baghdad as a centre of Muslim intellectual life, unrestrained activities of the 'rational thinkers', widespread sufism, and social anarchy in all walks of life."[5]

The second period of decline in the development of Fiqh occurred when the European colonizers, for 150 years, "directly ruled almost the whole of Asia and Africa, which were populated

1 Refer to Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, Evolution of the Mad Habs (Schools of Islamic Law), op. cit., pp. 1-156.
2 Ibid., pp. 96-110.
3 Abu Ameenah Bilaal Philips, ibid., p. 96.
4 Abdul Ghafur Muslim, "Islamic Laws in Historical Perspective: An Investigation into Problems and Principles in the Field of Islamization", op. cit., p. 73.
5 Ibid.

to a large extent by the Muslims."[1] The European colonizers – the British, the French and the Dutch alike – imposed their own legal system on the Muslims, except those related to family and property matters. They also "deculturized the Muslims in such a scientific manner as to ensure that it would be difficult to recover or organize themselves into a vital force again."[2]

After 150 years, decolonization took place, but the Europeans left behind their own **Western legal system** and culture. The new Muslim leaders who grew up under colonialism were no doubt influenced by western thinking and values. So, although the Muslims got their own independence from the Western powers, in the physical or geographic sense, they are now under new and higher forms of colonialism, known as neocolonialism and imperialism. The main indicators, in this respect, are predominance of the Western legal system and cultural values in most Muslim countries, despite the superiority of Islamic Law and values.

Nowadays, the Muslim masses have begun to realize that the discarding of Islamic Law, the prevalence of **Taqlid** and factionalism, as well as the presence of Western legal system and culture, have all contributed to their retrogression or backwardness. Many Muslims believe that the Ummah can regain its power and glory by reverting to Islamic Law and values.

1 Ibid., p. 74.
2 Ibid.

The Viability of Islamic Law to solve the Current Global Problems

The divine nature of Islam makes it the only religion in the world that offers genuine solutions to such problems as social unrest, political instabilities, poverty and destitution, prostitution, homicide, killing, drug addiction, alcoholism, family break-up, juvenile delinquency, suicides, AIDS and the like. Islam is not only a religion, but also a complete code of life. All facets of life, public and private alike, are covered under the realm of Islamic Law.

Islamic Law is *"the epitome of Islamic thought, the most typical manifestation of the Islamic way of life, the core and kernel of Islam itself... Apart from this, the whole life of the Muslims, Arabic literature and the Arabic and Islamic disciplines of learning are all deeply imbued with the ideals of Islamic law; it is impossible to understand Islam without understanding Islamic law".*[1]

Absolute Prohibition of Adultery, Prostitution and Other Forms of Sexual Promiscuity

Islamic Law explicitly prohibits adultery and fornication as clearly mentioned in the following Qur'anic injunctions:

1 Joseph Schacht, An Introduction to Islamic Law, quoted by Abdul Ghafur Muslim, "Islamic Laws in Historical Perspective: An Investigation into Problems and Principles in the Field of Islamization", The Islamic Quarterly, London: The Islamic Culture Centre, Second Quarter 1987, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, p. 80.

"Nor come nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils)."[1]

"The man and woman guilty of adultery or fornication, flog each of them with a hundred stripes: let no compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by God, if you believe in God and the Last Day: and let a party of believers witness their punishment."[2]

Adultery, fornication and other promiscuous sex practices are punishable in Islam, because they are indeed serious crimes which affect the entire society. As discussed earlier, the **AIDS** problem, which is reaching epidemic proportion, is due largely to sexual permissiveness. Thus, the divine punishment (hudud) for these social ills is certainly for the good of the entire humanity. Although, the AIDS problem is currently affecting largely those indulging in sexual promiscuity, many innocent individuals, including doctors, nurses and children, have been victimized by this social carnage. Even in countries, where AIDS is virtually non-existent, people are wary about the underlying danger. That is why the Chinese doctors likened AIDS to that of a holocaust.

Allah's justice is equally open to all. In Islam, one can not just be abused by the law. For instance, a charge against a chaste individual needs to be confirmed, beyond any reasonable doubt. Allah says:

And those who launch a charge against chaste women, and produce not four witnesses (to support their

1 Qur'an, Bani-Israil, 17:32
2 Qur'an, Nur, 24:2

allegations), flog them with 80 stripes; and reject their evidence ever after: for such men are wicked transgressors.[1]

Islam, therefore, discourages unwarranted suspicion as much as possible. Allah says:

O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: and spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, you would abhor it... But fear God: for God is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful.[2]

So, if a wicked person accuses a woman or a man of adultery or fornication, she or he should be given the benefit of the doubt. Allah warns the believers against the mischief of the wicked as follows:

O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done.[3]

True Muslims are indeed God-fearing. They avoid all kinds of vices to please Allah alone. True believers, for instance, are definitely mindful of the warning of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that: "There is nothing which God so abhor as his male and female servants committing adultery".[4]

1 Qur'an, Nur, 24:4
2 Holy Qur'an, 49:12
3 Qur'an, 49:6
4 Quoted by Azizullah, M, Glimpses of the Hadith (Karachi: The Crescent Publications, 1982).

The Principle of Equality and Justice: The Way to Overcome the Crimes Worldwide

Islam also provides absolutely effective solution to murder and other related crimes common in the West and elsewhere. The Islamic laws of equality and justice, tempered with mercy, are seen in the following Qur'anic injunctions:

"O ye who believe! the l aw of equality is prescribed to you in cases of murder: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the woman. But if any remission by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome gratitude. This is a concession and a mercy from your Lord. After this whoever exceeds the limits shall be in grave penalty."[1]

In the Law of Equality t here is (saving of) life to you, O ye men of understanding that ye may restrain yourselves.[2]

In it (i.e. the Torah) We decreed for them a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and a (similar) retribution for wounds. But for him who foregoes it out of mercy, it will atone for some of his sins. Those who do not judge in accordance with what Allah has revealed are

1 Qur'an, Al-Baqara, 2:178
2 Qur'an, Al-Baqara, 2:179

indeed wrongdoers.[1]

Nor take life — which Allah has made sacred — except for just cause. And if anyone is slain wrongfully, we have given his heir authority (to demand Qisas or to forgive): but let him not exceed bounds in the matter of taking life; for he is helped by the (Law).[2]

The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree): but if a person forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is due from Allah: for (Allah) loveth not those who do wrong.[3]

As to the thief, male or female, cut off his hand or her hands: a punishment by way of example, from Allah, for their crime: and God is exalted in power.[4]

But if the thief repent after his crime, and amend his conduct, Allah turneth to him in forgiveness; for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.[5]

We have already seen earlier that murder, burglary and other related crimes are taking place, day by day, in both the capitalist and communist worlds, notably in the United States and the Soviet Union. Had the West and elsewhere been under Islamic rule, as is the case of Saudi Arabia, such crimes would have rarely occurred. Saudi Arabia has remained the most peaceful country in the world, because of its adherence to Shari'ah. For instance, when a murderer is finally convicted, after passing through a legal procedure in accordance with the

1 Holy Qur'an, Al Maidah: 5:44-47
2 Qur'an, Bani Isra-il, 17:33
3 Qur'an, Shura, 42:40
4 Qur'an, Maida, 5:38
5 Qur'an, *Maida*, 5:39

Shari'ah, he will be punished accordingly in the eyes of the public. Conventional wisdom will tell anyone not to do anything against the law, when he sees that the culprits are duly punished. For the man of faith, however, he looks at this divine punishment for the culprits as Allah's blessing for the entire humanity. Duly punishing the convict for example, means that the law-abiding people will have peace of mind, because they know for sure that they are being protected by the Law. Thus, this is tantamount to removing the social cancer for the benefit of all.[1]

In contrast, as long as America, Europe and the rest of the world – including Muslim countries which emulate the West – stick to their man-made laws, they will always be on the brink of chaos and instability.

Where Islamic Law prevails, as in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the constituents are God-fearing and righteous. They obey the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that: "Of all men, the people who have faith abstain most from killing."[2]

The Divorce Issue in Islam

Regarding marital frictions, man's hatred or displeasure against his wife does not mean that he is free to mistreat or abuse her. In case of serious dispute between the wife and husband, Islam has laid down very scientific steps to be followed.

1 In Saudi Arabia, it was a common knowledge that when the Saudi vendors go to prayer, they used to leave open their own stores, money and other belongings, without any resultant problem of shoplifting, stealing and the like. The foreigners have mixed reactions to this exemplary state of peace and order. Many attribute this to the superiority of Shari'ah as a constitutional guide to mankind. Some wicked individuals, however, took advantage of the situation, by bringing into the Kingdom the malpractices they have inherited from their respective countries, such as indulgence in drugs, alcohol and the like. The situation, however, has remained under effective control, since anyone caught and convicted is penalized, in accordance with the Shari'ah.

2 Abu Daud

The underlying objective is peace and reconciliation for the integration of the family.

In an Islamic state, civil courts also handle legal matters pertaining to marital problems. However, members of the community, particularly the parents and relatives, are duty-bound to help pacify the couple, before the friction becomes too serious to handle. Allah says:

> *If ye fear a breach between them twain, appoint (two) arbiters, one from his family, and the other from hers; if they wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation: for Allah hath full knowledge, and is acquainted with all things.*[1]

Allah has enjoined on the believing men to treat their wives with kindness, as the following verse shows:

> *O ye who believe! Ye are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should ye treat them with harshness, that ye may take away part of the dower ye have given them – except where they have been guilty of open lewdness; on the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If ye take a dislike to them it may be that ye dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good."*[2]

The Qur'an has a whole chapter entitled "Divorce" (Al Talaq).[3] Verse One of Chapter 65 (*Al-Talaq*) states:

> *O Prophet! When ye divorce women, divorce them at their prescribed periods, and count (accurately) their*

1 Qur'an, Al Nisa' 4:35
2 Qur'an, Al Nisa, 4:19
3 Qur'an, Al Talaq, 65:1-7

prescribed periods: and f ear Allah your Lord: And turn them not out of their houses, nor shall they (themselves) leave, except in case they are guilty of open lewdness, those are limits set by Allah: and any who transgresss the limits of Allah, does verily wrong his (own) soul: thou knowest not if perchance Allah will bring about thereafter some new situation.[1]

In Islam, the wife is equally granted the right to divorce her husband if her demand for divorce is justifiable. That is, if the marriage does not prove to be functional and effective because the husband neglects his responsibilities or no element of love binds them to stay together. By the same token, if the wife is guilty of open lewdness, the husband may resort to divorce. However, the Prophet's advice on the issue of divorce should be borne in mind. He says that "The lawful thing which God hates most is divorce."[2] However, when things seem worst that peace and reconciliation between wife and husband are next to impossible, divorce maybe inevitable. Allah says:

For tnose who take an oath for abstention from their wives, a waiting for four months is ordained; if they then return, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

But if their intention is firm for divorce, Allah heareth and knoweth all things.

Divorced women shall wait concerning themselves for three months period. Nor is it lawful for them to hide what Allah hath created in their wombs, if they have

1 In his commentary on this verse, Abdullah Yusuf Ali says that "in the first instance the Prophet is himself addressed individually, as the Teacher, and representative of the Community. Then the actual directions: 'When ye...': are addressed to the community collectively. See Abdullah Yusuf Ali, The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary, New Revised Edition (Brentwood: Amana Corporation, 1989), p. 1483.

2 Abu Daud

faith in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have the better right to take them back in that period, if they wish for reconciliation. And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree (of advantage) over them and Allah is exalted in Power, Wise.

A divorce is only permissible twice: after that, the parties should either hold together on equitable terms, or separate with kindness. It is not lawful for you, (men), to take back any of your gifts (from your wives), except when both parties fear that they would be unable to keep the limits ordained by Allah. There is no blame on either of them if she give something for her freedom. These are the limits ordained by Allah; so do not transgress them if any do transgress the limits ordained by Allah, such persons wrong (themselves as well as others).

So if a husband divorces his wife (irrevocably), he cannot, after that, remarry her until after she has married another husband and he has divorced her. In that case there is no blame on either of them if they reunite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah. Such are the limits ordained by Allah, which he makes plain for those to those who understand.

When ye divorce women, and they fulfil the term of their ('Iddah), either take them back on equitable terms or set them free on equitable terms; but do not take them back to injure them, (or) to take undue advantage; if anyone does that, he wrongs his own soul. Do not treat Allah's Signs as a jest, but solemnly rehearse Allah's favours on you, and the fact that He sent down to you the Book and Wisdom for your instruction. And fear Allah, and know that Allah is well-acquainted with

all things.

When ye divorce women, and they fulfil the term of their ('Iddah), do not prevent them from marrying their (former) husbands, if they mutually agree on equitable terms. This instruction is for all amongst you, who believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is (the course making for) most virtue and purity amongst you. And Allah knows, and ye know not.[1]

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) says:

"If any woman asks her husband for divorce without some strong reasons the odor of paradise will be forbidden to her."[2]

Prohibition of Intoxicants and Gambling

At first, the Muslims in Medina were not prohibited to drink intoxicating wine or liquor, and to gamble. When Muslims began to ask about drinking and gambling, the Prophet (peace be upon him) received the following revelation:

They ask thee concerning wine and gambling. Say: "In them is great sin, and some profit, for men; but the sin is greater than the profit."[3]

While this revelation helped in minimizing alcoholism among Muslims those days, they still continued to drink. Many

1 Qur'an, Al Baqara, 2:228, 232
2 Abu Daud, Tirmidhi, Ibn Maja
3 Qur'an, Al Baqara, 2:219

were even under the influence of liquor when they were in prayers. So, another Qur'anic injunction from Allah was revealed to the Prophet as follows:

> *O ye who believe! Approach not prayers with a mind befogged, until ye can understand all that ye say.*[1]

The final revelation on the prohibition of drinking wine and gambling says:

> *"O ye who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, (dedication) of stones, and (divination by) arrows are an abomination of Satan's handiwork: Eschew such abomination, that you may prosper.*
>
> *Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred among you, with intoxicants and gambling, and to turn you away from the remembrance of God and from Prayer: Will you not then abstain?"*[2]

Again, had the West and elsewhere been under Islamic rule, the problems of alcoholism in the United States, Soviet Union and elsewhere in the world would have been minimized, if not eradicated.

The problems of alcoholism and drug-addiction prevalent among the people in the developed countries of the world point to the fact that they are unhappy.

1 Qur'an, Al Nisa, 4:43
2 Qur'an, Maida, 5:90-91

The Prohibition of Suicide

In the non-Muslim parts of the world, when problems go uncontrolled, many simply do not know what to do and where to go. So, they kill themselves, as already discussed earlier. In contrast, a non-Muslim historian Philip Hitti in his book History of the Arabs, objectively emphasizes that suicide is rare in Muslim Lands. He says: *"In this uncompromising monotheism, with its simple, enthusiastic faith in the supreme rule of a transcendent being, lies the chief strength of Islam. Its adherents enjoy a consciousness of contentment and resignation unknown among followers of most creeds."*[1]

Islam considers life as a trust (*amanah*) from Allah. All good things that one possesses are, in fact, *amanah* – his own mind, body and soul, his life-partner, his own children, his wealth and the like. All of these belong to Allah alone. Thus, what right has one got to take his life away. Allah says:

> *"O ye who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities: But let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual good-will: Nor kill (or destroy) yourselves: for verily God hath been to you Most Merciful!*
>
> *If any do that in rancour and injustice, soon shall We*

1 Quoted by Abul A'la Mawdudi, Towards Understanding Islam, op. cit., p. 108.

cast them into the Fire: and easy it is for God."[1]

The Muslims know well that suicide is absolutely prohibited by Allah. No Muslim commits suicide, because if he does, he will have the Hell-fire as his eternal abode. The Prophet says:

> *"He who throws himself from a mountain and kills himself will be thrown in the fire and remain in it forever; and he who sips poison and kills himself will have his poison in his hand and sip it forever and ever in the fire of hell."*[2] *"Do not harm yourself or others."*[3]

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Indeed, the teachings of Islam cater to humanity-at-large. All problems affecting man and his environment can be solved through proper implementation of Islamic Law. But, how can the current global problems be solved through Islam, when Muslims themselves do not implement it? How can we prove to others that we can solve their problems when we ourselves have more problems to solve?

Now that the Muslim society is, in general, at variance with real Islam, it is our duty to help rectify the conditions we are in. Knowing that Islamic Law was effectively implemented before, there is no reason why it cannot be viably carried out now and in the future. By the Grace of Allah, Islamic revival is already in the offing, and Muslim men and women should have strong commitment and conviction to cooperate along this path.

1 Qur'an, Nisaa, 4:29-30
2 Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daud, Tirmidhi and Nasai
3 Ahmad and Ibn Maja

Muslims need to think "global" as members of the *Ummah.* They should be able to break all barriers against their unity and brotherhood. Muslims worldwide should continuously promote cooperation, brotherhood and unity among themselves. Allah says:

> *Help one another in righteousness and piety, but help not one another in sin and rancor: fear God: for God is strict in punishment.*[1]

> *The Believers are but a single Brotherhood: so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear God that you may receive Mercy.*[2]

Muslims, both as individuals and as groups, should help carry out the task of Da'wah. They should persistently let the world know that Islam is for all mankind. They should behave according to the teachings of Islam. They must strictly adhere to the Qur'an and Sunnah, so that non-Muslims will notice and appreciate the beauty of Islam. In other words, reviving the golden age of the Ummah should start at home. We should imbibe in our families the real teachings of Islam, so that we can reassert our identity as Muslims. We should see to it that the immediate members of our families, our daughters, sons and wives, are models of what Muslims should be. At the same time, we should also ask our family members to help convey the message of Islam to others.

1 Holy Qur'an, 5:2
2 Holy Qur'an, 49:10